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S E C R E T ROME 003169

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR INR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/08/2013

TAGS: [PINR](#) [IT](#) [IZ](#) [FAO](#)

SUBJECT: IRAQI REP STILL ACCREDITED TO ROME

REF: ROME 3050

CLASSIFIED BY: EMIL M. SKODON DCM FOR REASONS 1.5 (B)

11. (U) THIS IS A JOINT REPORT OF US MISSION TO FAO AND EMBASSY ROME. SEE ACTION REQUEST PARA 6.

12. (S) MUTASIM ARIF AL-FITYAN, LISTED IN THE UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) PERMANENT MISSION DIRECTORY AS "ALTERNATE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE" (THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE POSITION IS HELD BY MUHAMMAD AL-SHEIKH), AND IDENTIFIED BY ORCA AND SISMI (THE GOI EXTERNAL SERVICE) AS THE IIS STATION CHIEF IN ROME, IS BELIEVED TO BE IN IRAQ. HOWEVER, HIS FAMILY MEMBERS ARE STILL IN ROME AND SISMI BELIEVES HE INTENDS TO RETURN TO ROME SOON.

13. (C) FODAG AMBASSADOR HALL RAISED THE ISSUE OF EXPELLING AL-FITYAN WITH FAO DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL DAVID HARCHARIK IN EARLY MAY 2003. FODAG ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION FOLLOWED UP WITH MR. HARCHARIK MAY 20, 2003. HARCHARIK STATED THAT "THE BALL IS IN THE COURT OF THE ITALIAN MFA" AND THAT FAO HAD MADE PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT IT HAD NO OBJECTION TO THE MFA WITHDRAWING AL-FITYAN'S CREDENTIALS.

14. (S) DURING OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM, EMBASSY ROME REPEATEDLY PRESSED THE GOI MFA TO EXPEL AL-FITYAN, AS INSTRUCTED, ALONG WITH OTHER IRAQI "DIPLOMATS". THE ITALIAN MFA DID EVENTUALLY EXPEL MOST OF THE IRAQI INDIVIDUALS WHOSE EXPULSION WE HAD REQUESTED. THE MFA HOWEVER, HAVING NO PRECEDENT FOR EXPELLING SOMEONE ACCREDITED TO FAO ON ESPIONAGE GROUNDS, DRAGGED ITS FEET UNTIL SADDAM HAD FALLEN AND HAS SINCE TAKEN NO ACTION.

15. (S) SISMI TELLS ORCA IT TOLD THE ITALIAN MFA THAT IT HAD NO OBJECTION TO THE MFA EXPELLING AL-FITYAN. ACCORDING TO SISMI, WHICH HAS HAD CONTACT WITH AL-FITYAN SINCE, HE CLAIMED NOT TO BE CONNECTED TO THE FORMER REGIME'S INTELLIGENCE SERVICES, AND MADE VAGUE PROMISES OF COOPERATION. SISMI SEEMS DISINCLINED TO MOVE AGAINST HIM NOW, SHOULD HE RETURN TO ROME PRESUMABLY BECAUSE HE MAY BE IN A POSITION TO PROVIDE SOMETHING VALUABLE. SISMI MONITORED AL-FITYAN CLOSELY BEFORE HE LEFT ROME, AND TELLS ORCA THAT IT HAS NOT SEEN AL-FITYAN INVOLVED IN ANY INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY SINCE THE REGIME FELL.

16. (S) ACTION REQUEST: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RE-AFFIRMATION OF EARLIER INSTRUCTION TO PRESS FIRST SISMI, THEN MFA, FOR EXPULSION OF AL-FITYAN. THIS PROCESS WOULD ALSO BE SMOOTHED IF THE NEW IRAQI MFA ORDERED HIM RECALLED TO BAGHDAD; IF CPA IS IN A POSITION TO ENCOURAGE THIS ACTION, IT WOULD BE APPRECIATED. END ACTION REQUEST.

17. (C) ON A RELATED ISSUE, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHARGE AT IRAQ'S BILATERAL MISSION TO ITALY, FARRIS AL-SHOQER (WHO HAPPENS TO BE AL-FITYAN'S BROTHER-IN-LAW), WILL BE RECALLED BY THE IRAQI MFA. WE WILL ENCOURAGE THE ITALIAN MFA, HAS PREVIOUSLY DOWNPLAYED OUR CONCERNS ABOUT AL-SHOQER'S OWN INTELLIGENCE CONNECTION (REFTEL), TO MOVE TO EFFECT HIS DEPARTURE.

18. MINIMIZE CONSIDERED
SEMBLER

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